

**From:** Alan J. Ecklof  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** Why now?

The fact that Microsoft is being punished now for behavior everybody knew was occurring since at least 1994, is like closing the barn door after the horse is out. Those who turned to IBM's OS/2 for a far superior OS in the early to mid-nineties are well aware of how MS manipulated the independent vendors. By making intentionally premature promises of a new OS(Windows 95) delivery, MS forced them to allocate resources to Windows development and ignore an OS that was better(by Gates' own admission) and already existed. The infamous MS software delays came to be known as vaporware. This led to a dearth of applications for OS/2 and no new OS for Windows machines. When it finally arrived, it was more hype than substance. I, personally, stopped using OS/2 when MS made a minor change to the Win32 service and forced IBM to pay 'again' for the right to be compatible, which according to sources was the last straw and led to a niche OS.

As far as forcing computer mfrs. into expensive licensing deals, that is only another example of how a monopoly can extend its reach and force people to buy their software, when that may not be the buyer's first choice. Now the problem has become trying to punish the company after it "finally" has gotten it right and made a product that is worthy of praise(WindowsXP). This would only serve to make life difficult for all that use Microsoft products and possibly regress to the bad old days.

This would have been a perfect scenario 4-7 years ago when Microsoft products were still, basically, expensive garbage and their far superior competitors still had some semblance of market share to further develop. Now it's nothing more than window dressing and does nothing to repair the software companies ruined by these illegal practices. In addition, some of the plaintiffs, AOL in particular, are no better than the defendant.

I wish I had a dime for every hour I spent trying to keep an MS Operating System alive and working or just reinstalling it again.  
Please don't do anything that would bring back those days.